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[Review of] The Album: A Guide to Pop Music's Most Provocative, Influential, and Important Creations

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[Review of] **The Album: A Guide to Pop Music's Most Provocative, Influential, and Important Creations**

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The Album: a guide to pop music's most provocative, influential, and important creations, ed. by James E. Perone. Praeger, 2012. 4v bibl discography index afp ISBN [9780313379062](#), \$257.00; ISBN [9780313379079](#) [ebook](#), contact publisher for price

Perone (Univ. of Mount Union) is the editor of the series in which this set appears, "The Praeger Singer-Songwriter Collection," and most of the 15 contributors wrote volumes for the series. The set examines 160 albums, exploring the evolving nature of the album from 1960 to 2010. The critical essays (most four to five pages) cover lyrics, music, and the album's importance. Coverage is weighted toward rock, pop, and alternative with scattered coverage of country, soul, and hip-hop. The presentation is chronological, and each volume includes an introductory essay about the period the volume covers. Musicians covered range from Joan Baez to The Black Keys; significant artists are absent, among them Jethro Tull, Moby, REM, Decemberists. Appendixes include an additional 101 influential albums, described briefly; a discography of the main titles; and a cursory bibliography of titles, primarily from the Praeger series. Each volume contains an analytical index. Although Perone describes the work as "scholarly but ... written for the lay reader," many essays assume knowledge of specialized terminology (e.g., minor submediant [vi] chords). The best volumes of the "33 1/3 Series" provide much more detailed analysis of albums from this period. Nonetheless, this set should be in music history collections. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Large collections; all readers.

--R. A. Aken, *University of Kentucky*

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